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The Making Of A Super

By Tim Deutscher
Asst. Super. Mesa Verde C.C.

Assistant superintendents, who are they, what do they do, what should they do? Certainly every superintendent has his own set of answers to these questions. However, one thing is certain, every assistant superintendent should, as his title suggests, assist the superintendent.

There are many factors which influence the amount of assistance each assistant can and should provide. These including the background, abilities and goals of the assistant as well as the requirements and desires of the superintendent. A well qualified assistant should, if the superintendent wishes, be able to assist the superintendent in all areas of golf course management. Additionally, if the superintendent believes in the theory that two heads are better than one, he'll welcome any additional input he can get, and chances are his assistant knows more about his golf course than anyone but the superintendent himself.

One of the most important benefits the assistant can provide is perhaps to schedule and supervise the crew in a manner which assures the superintendent that every member of the maintenance crew is continually doing his job efficiently and satisfactorily at all times. This can include everything from ensuring that all chemical applications to the greens are properly calibrated to monitoring the length of lunch and coffee breaks, to making sure there's always water in every ballwasher.

As you know, all too often its the little things that get all the attention. Water in ballwashers, debris on cart paths, unfilled divots, and so on. By relieving the superintendent of many relatively minor worries the assistant allows the superintendent additional time to give to major problems such as, well, you know what they are.

To these ends the superintendent should keep the assistant well informed about all matters, large and small which concern maintaining the course. In turn the assistant should bring all matters large and small to the attention of the superintendent. This process will give both individuals a better conception of what's actually being accomplished on a daily basis.

In order for the assistant to perform he must first be there, on time, ready to go everyday. He must know and be willing to perform the jobs of all members on the crew and the standards which the superintendent requires. This should include knowing the proper operation and maintenance of all equipment and machinery. And, he must be out there, on the course, observing, training, helping and reporting it back to the superintendent.

The assistant is, or should be, out there to learn. He may desire to one day become a superintendent himself. So as long as he's out there learning all he can he might as well be assisting all he can. ■

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